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National Forest

Methow Valley, Chelan, and
Tonasket Ranger Districts

Chelan, Okanogan,
Whatcom, and Skagit
Counties, Washington



February 2013



Pack and Saddle Stock Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit Issuance

Final Environmental Impact Statement



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Pack and Saddle Stock Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit Issuance
Final Environmental Impact Statement
Okanogan, Chelan, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties, Washington

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Abstract: The USDA Forest Service is proposing to issue 10-year term special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides. The permits would be issued to the existing holders who are in good standing at the time of the decision, or replacements who meet term permit requirements. The project area is located in Okanogan, Skagit, Whatcom, and Chelan Counties, Washington, on the Tonasket, Methow Valley, and Chelan Ranger Districts. Four alternatives, including a No Action alternative, are analyzed in this FEIS. Alternative 1 is the No Action alternative. No pack and saddle stock outfitter-guide permits would be issued under this alternative. Alternative 2 would issue 10-year special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides, with a total of 4,620 service days. This alternative would amend the Okanogan and Wenatchee Forest Plans to prohibit pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides from increasing the amount of barren core in any established campsite; and in campsites where the existing amount of barren core exceeds 5,250 square feet, outfitter-guides shall not use more than 5,250 square feet, and use the same area on successive visits. A second amendment would allow pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides to use existing campsites within 200 feet of meadows, lakes, streams, and key interest areas. Alternative 3 would also issue 10-year term special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides, with a total of 2,660 service days. This alternative would amend the forest plans to prohibit the outfitter-guides from increasing the amount of barren core in established campsites; and in campsites where the existing amount of barren core exceeds 2,800 square feet, outfitter-guides shall not use more than 2,800 square feet, and use the same area on successive visits. A second amendment would also limit the party size for outfitter groups to 12 (any combination of people and stock), and a third would prohibit pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides from using campsites within 200 feet of wetlands, lakes, streams, or key interest areas, but would allow use of camps within 200 feet of dry meadows. Alternative 4 would issue 10-year special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides, with a total of 6,700 service days. This alternative would amend the Okanogan and Wenatchee Forest Plans to allow pack and saddle stock outfitter-guide to use existing barren core in established campsites, but prohibit them from creating additional barren core. A second amendment would allow pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides to use existing campsites within 200 feet of meadows, lakes, streams, and key interest areas.

Comments on the Draft EIS were considered and resulted in a new alternative and analysis modifications presented in the Final EIS. The Response to Comments on the Draft EIS is located in FEIS Appendix M. Changes between Draft and Final EIS are summarized at the beginning of each chapter.

Website address for electronic copy of the FEIS and Summary: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/okawen/projects

Look for "Pack and Saddle Stock Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit Issuance Final Environmental Impact Statement" at this site, and follow the link to the document.

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